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INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Czechoslovakia

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

1. Four former engineers at MEZ in Vsetin (N 49-20, E 18-00) and one former designer at MEZ Development in Brno, all of whom had been arrested by the Communists on charges of economic sabotage in late 1952, were released in mid-1954. Contrary to previous practices, they were permitted to resume work in their profession. One of the men from MEZ Vsetin, one Ing. Josef Farous, had been chief of the design and testing department. He and three subordinates had apparently been arrested because of design failures in a series of induction motors built for the Soviet Union. The designs had indeed been faulty, but source thought that the mistakes of the designers had not been deliberate. The four men were held until May or June 1954 when they were brought to trial, given sentences of 20 months, the exact length of time they had been in prison, and released. The engineer from MEZ Development, one Dr. Wilhelm Klima, was arrested later than the others and on a different charge. He was apparently accused of having sabotaged the designs of some dynamometers built for the Soviet Union. He also was brought to trial in May or June 1954 and given a sentence of 20 months. Since he had not been in prison as long as the others, he was not released until a few months later, when he had served 20 months.
2. In March 1954, a meeting was called at MEZ Vsetin to get the designers to agree to work overtime. At this meeting a Party official who was a member of the factory works council remarked that the designers had no need to fear arrest if they made honest mistakes in their work. The Party official did not amplify his remarks but the designers understood him to mean that cases such as those described in paragraph one would be handled differently thereafter.

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